

SINS OF OMISSION

NO. 838

A SERMON
DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, OCTOBER 25, 1868,
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but walked every one in the imagination of their evil heart: therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant which I commanded them to do; but they did them not.”
Jeremiah 11:8.

JEREMIAH was commissioned of God to bring a solemn accusation against rebellious Israel, and he commences by solemnly mentioning their sins of omission. Observe that neglect of the divine command is the charge brought in the text. In the next verses, the prophet goes on to mention their sins of *commission*, but he very properly gives the first place to their shortcomings in positive service; he reminds them of what they had *not* done which they *ought* to have done, and how constantly and persistently they had refused to render active obedience to the righteous will of the Most High. Brothers and sisters, it is well for us to have our sins brought to our remembrance. This morning we may spend a little time most profitably by looking into the glass of Holy Scripture to discover the spots upon our countenances. Perhaps some of you whose sins have never been forgiven because you have never sought to have them pardoned, never having been sufficiently conscious of the danger in which they placed you, may be by the Holy Spirit this morning convicted of sin, and led to Jesus! While I shall be trying to speak of your great omissions, perhaps conscience may be at work, and the Holy Spirit may work through conscience so that you may be led to repentance, and to faith, and through faith to salvation. “It is a consummation devoutly to be wished.” Others here who have been pardoned, who rejoice every day in the perfect forgiveness which they have found at the foot of Christ’s cross will, nevertheless, be benefited by being reminded of their sins, for thus they will be humbled; thus they will be led to prize more the great atoning sacrifice; thus they will be driven again to renew the simplicity of their faith as they look to Him on whom Jehovah made to meet the iniquities of all His people. God grant that also, for His name’s sake.

I shall, this morning, take rather the *spirit* of the text than the words of it. The subject will be *sins of omission*.

I. First, I would call your attention to THE GREAT COMMONNESS OF THESE, to their commonness in the wide world, to their frequency in our own circle of society, and to each man, to each woman, I would say, to their abundance in your own heart.

Here it is observed at the outset *that in a certain sense, all offenses against the law of God come under the head of sins of omission*, for in every sin of commission there is an omission—an omission, at least, of that godly fear which would have prevented disobedience. Our Lord has told us that the whole law is summarized in these two commandments: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself.” Since, then, every sin must be a breach of this all-comprehensive law, every sin must, from a certain aspect, be a sin of omission. Consider, then, how multitudinous have been your omissions and mine! Have we loved the Lord our God with all our heart? Perhaps you have omitted to love Him at all, and you who have loved Him, have omitted to love Him with “all your heart.” And if

at any time you *have* loved with “all your heart,” yet you have omitted to *continue* in this. There have been slowing downs, and intermissions—and every omission of obedience becomes a distinct act of disobedience to the Most High. We have not served Him with “all our mind,” any more than with all our heart; that is to say we have not yielded up our understanding to His infinite wisdom and authority. We have even dared to re-judge His judgments, and murmur against His providences; we have not surrendered our wills to His will, but have desired things contrary to His purpose, and to His truth. Neither has our strength been entirely devoted to His service. We have not done unto You, Creator and Preserver, at all according to the benefits which we have received! Take the first four commandments, which make up the first table, and what sins of omission have we all committed there! We have omitted to make God the chief, the first, the foremost, the only Lord of our spirit, and we have too often had other gods before Him; we have omitted to treat His name with the reverence which He demands, and if we have not committed profanity or blasphemy, yet that name has not always been hallowed by us as it should have been. As for His day, it has not always been sacredly guarded as a day of mental as well as bodily rest; we have done servile work in our minds, if not with our hands, by our many cares, and fretfulness, and so have failed to honor our God with the joyful worship which He deserves. Think, dear friends, especially you who know God, and rejoice in Him, how ill you have treated the Father of your spirits! He deserved, since He has bought you with the blood of His dear Son, to be served with an all-consuming earnestness; He rightly claims the cream of our thoughts, the best of our meditations, and that our souls should always be diligent in His service, but alas, we have been sluggards and idlers! We have not spoken well of His name; we have not sounded abroad His glory; we have not been obedient to His will. We are unprofitable servants, for we have not done what it was our duty to have done towards our God.

The other portion of the law, our Savior tells us, is contained in these words, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Which of us has done *that*? We must plead guilty even before we come to details! Take the command as it stands, and there is no man of woman born who shall dare to say that he has been perfect in this. Especially let me remind you of those sins of omission which daily occur in our various relationships. We have oftentimes omitted to act lovingly towards our neighbor; we have failed to do the kind thing towards the sick, and the poor in relieving them, or the right thing towards the ignorant in seeking their instruction. I am afraid that many of us have the blood of our neighbors upon our garments, because we have left them in ignorance, and have not told them the gospel. And if they die in their sins they might well, with their dying breath, upbraid us who, having the light of God, have not carried it to them. You cannot, I think, look out of your window and say, “I am clear concerning all those who abide around me. I have, to the utmost of my ability, done for them what I shall wish to have done when I come to die.” Brothers and sisters, have you not fallen into sins of omission against your own children? They have grown up now, some of them—did you for them, in matters towards God, do as you could wish, now that you are done? Or your little ones who are around about you—are you sure that you are always doing everything that God would have you do to train them up in His fear? Are there no omissions in the household? For my own part, I dare not think of my relationships towards this church, towards the world, towards other churches of Jesus Christ, towards my own household without the blush and the tear! Beloved, our sins of omission are not to be numbered! Their number grows, as we examine ourselves, till they are more in number than the hairs of our head, and if we had to be justified by our own works, we dare not look up, but must bow our head as guilty culprits, and submit to the sentence of God.

Look at sins of omission in another light. How many there are who have omitted yet to perform the first and all essential gospel commands! Wherever the gospel goes, it cries, “Repent and be converted”; and yet again, “Repent and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus”; and yet again, “Believe in the

Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved.” Now, I will not speak of the neglect of baptism, though the mass of the church and the world have renounced baptism, and have adopted a ceremony of their own invention, but I *will* speak to you of the neglect of repentance, for many of you in this house have been urged, again and again, to repent and consider your iniquities, but you have refused the sacred counsel. There was, indeed, room enough for repentance, and cause enough for a change of mind—but, though you have heard the arguments for penitence, your heart still remains hard towards God, and no true sorrow for sin is found within your spirit. How often have these lips declared to you that faith in Jesus Christ is both your *duty*, and your *privilege*; that it alone can save you? Yet that faith you have neither sought nor desired! You know in *theory* what saving faith means; you could explain to others what it is to believe in Jesus, and yet you remain hearers of the word, and not *doers* of it, deceiving your own souls. Throughout this huge city of ours, dense masses of men know the gospel, but obey it not! They have heard it, or might hear it if they would, but they have not obeyed the gospel. As Isaiah says, it has been a hardening to them, and not a gracious means of renewal. O unbelievers the lack of faith is a sin of omission which will sink you to the lowest hell! This is the most damning sin of all, and above all others fills the gates of hell—that men believe not on Jesus Christ, but love darkness rather than light!

Again, what sins of omission cluster round *religious duties*! A large proportion of our fellow citizens neglect altogether the outward worship of God. God forgive them, and send a change in the manners of the people by which the houses of prayer shall be thronged! Alas, it is not with these we need to deal with just now if we would find sins of neglect. Are there not with you, my hearers, even with *you*, sins against the Lord our God? What omissions we are guilty of as to prayer? How some live as if there were no God, or as if atheistic views had bewitched them; from morning to night multitudes forget the Most High, and call not on His name, and if, perhaps, they do remember to bow the knee in outward supplication, how few really *adore* their Maker? How lax in devotion are the most of us? How ready to be excused from communion with God? How short we make our prayers, and how little of our hearts do we throw into them? And that Bible, as it lies open before us, how, with silent but solemn eloquence, it accuses us! Can you look at it, my hearers, without shame? Unread is that book from day to day while the ephemeral *newspaper*—the mere record of the flying hour, and its trivialities is read with eagerness to the neglect of the great things of God’s law! Truly, we cannot even look around upon the place where we assemble for worship without our omissions accusing us—for when we have been here, we have not set our thoughts upon God, we have not sung His praises with heart-music! When the time of prayer has come, our thoughts have been gadding here and there after vanity. Brothers and sisters, whatever part of religious worship comes under review, we must confess that we have left undone the things which we ought to have done! And so take the whole stretch of human life, from the cradle to gray old age! We failed to honor our parents in our youth; we have been slow in honoring God throughout our manhood, and at the close of life the same omission in different forms may be charged upon us. God deserves of us that we should serve Him that we should, to the utmost of our abilities, contribute to the revenue of His glory. But our talents have been wrapped in a napkin; our service has been given to *self*—we have lived to please ourselves, or to win our fellow creatures’ applause, while our blessed God has had only the dregs of our thoughts, the remnants of our time, the refuse of our actions.

The roll of our omissions is very long, and if it were read by a tender conscience, it would seem black with multiplied lamentations. Who among us, apart from the atonement, can endure the thought that God records all our failures of duty as well as our actual transgressions? Who, I say, could dare to look up if it were not for those streaming wounds of that blessed Son of God who has blotted out our iniquities, and washed away our scarlet stains? Our omissions frown upon us, and thunder at us; they lie upon the horizon of memory like masses of storm clouds accumulating for a horrible tempest! None of

us dares turn our eyes in that direction until first we have seen the Lord's appointed propitiation, and found our rest in Him.

II. Brothers and sisters, I call you to a second thought—what is THE CAUSE OF THIS EXCESSIVE MULTIPLICITY OF SINS OF OMISSION?

Of course, my brethren, the great cause lies in our *evil hearts*. That we do not bring forth fruit unto God is because our depraved nature is barren towards Him. Man is, by nature, dead in sin; and how can the dead in sin perform actions which express spiritual life? Can we expect to gather grapes or figs from withered trees? “You must be born-again,” and until this inward change, this thorough *regeneration* of our nature has been accomplished, we remain barren, and unprofitable, and unaccepted of God. Lack of the new nature is the great root of the matter in the ungodly; and the absence of a new heart and a right spirit mean men will never obey the Lord's commands till the Holy Spirit takes away the heart of stone, and gives them a heart of flesh. May the Lord do that for you, O you unsaved ones, and His shall be the praise! I suspect that the unnoticed superabundance of sins of omission may result, also, from the fact that the conscience of man is not well alive to sins of omission. If any of you had committed theft, he would most likely feel much ashamed; if another had fallen into an act of unchastity, it would probably stick in his conscience for a while, unless, indeed, habit had rendered him callous to it! But while conscience will chastise most men for direct acts of wrong, it is not in every case sufficiently alive to rebuke us for so much as one in 10 of our *omissions*, and, indeed, even our *memory* willfully refuses to file the record of duties left undone. Yet, beloved, there is as much sin in not loving God as in lusting after evil! There is as much rebellion in not obeying God as in breaking His commands. Measure for measure—put into the scales together, it may even happen that a sin of omission may turn out to be more sinful than one of commission! A sin of omission argues a state of mind sinful and corrupt, while a sin of commission may only be occasioned by the violence of a temptation while after all, the soul is at heart, right with God. Those sins of ours which we have never confessed or noticed, which have slipped away with the hours, and have gone as a dream, are recorded in the book of God, and in the day when unforgiven sinners with awakened consciences shall be made to hear that book read out before an assembled universe, woe unto them, woe unto them, that they refused to be obedient to the Lord!

No doubt, sins of omission are also multiplied through laziness. Some men have not enough force of character in them to be downright wicked; they are mere chips in the porridge with nothing of manhood in them; they are so idle that they are not even good enough to be diligent servants of *Satan*! There are some who would, if they could, I think, lie in bed and rot of slothfulness, to whom it would be their most supreme bliss to have nothing to do forever, and nothing to think of except maybe a little eating, and drinking by way of variety. Because this laziness abounds, many men sleep on, and awake not to righteousness and to the service of God. For them to repent is troublesome; to believe in Jesus Christ requires the exercise of thought; to be a Christian is too laborious; to watch their conduct and conversation is too much to require of them! If heaven could be reached in a sound sleep, and sleeping cars could be run all the way to the Celestial City, they would be among the best of pilgrims, but they cannot rub their eyes even to see Jesus, or leave their couch to win heaven itself! How these simpletons will wake up one day when they find that their life of trifling has brought them within the fast *closed* gates of hell! God is not to be trifled with! He does not make immortal beings that they may sport like butterflies from flower to flower; He does not create souls, and give them lives to spend in child's play, fashionable frivolities, and killing of time! Yet in the face of eternity, life, death, heaven, and hell, multitudes upon multitudes are ruined simply because they neglect the great salvation and are absolutely too idle to concern themselves about eternal matters. They *doze* into damnation! They *sleep* into eternal fire! But what a waking! O my fellow men and women, run not the risk, run not the risk!

Ignorance, too, is a more excusable, and, perhaps, less fruitful cause of sins of omission, but still a prominent one. Some men neglect to serve God because they do not know His word, His mind, or His gospel. But with many the ignorance is willful. In every land the subject is supposed to know the law—and though our magistrates very rightly are often lenient to prisoners who commit the first offense against a new law, yet such leniency lasts only for a case or two. And if after the law has been made for years, a prisoner pleaded that he did not know a law, he would be told that he ought to have known it. Especially is this the case with us who have the law here in the Bible, and who have it moreover written upon our consciences, so that when we sin, we sin not as the heathen do, but sin against the light of God, and knowledge. If a man sins through ignorance, he is so far excusable as the ignorance is excusable, but no further. And in this country, an ignorance of Christ, an ignorance of gospel duties, an ignorance of the law of God is without excuse, since in almost every street Jesus Christ is preached, and the word of God is within every man's reach! If he is but willing and desirous to know the mind of God, he may soon discover it. Yet, I doubt not, ignorance in many, many cases—willing, witting ignorance—does cause many sins of omission.

Sins of omission, again, are very plentiful because men excuse themselves so readily about them by the pretense of a more convenient season. "I have not repented," says one, "but then I mean to do so; I have not believed, but I shall do so before long; it is true I neglected prayer today, but then I intend, by-and-by, to give myself to supplication." So that men imagine that God is to be served by them at their own times and seasons! *God* is to wait until it pleases *them* to do His bidding, and when they have a more convenient season, *then* will they listen to His word, and to His Spirit! Ah, but, sirs, the excuse of some future improvement is pitiful—it holds no water, for we are always bound to serve God at once, and the postponement of service is the perpetuation of *rebellion*.

Many neglectors of God's will excuse themselves by the prevalence of the like conduct. To omit to love and serve the Lord is the custom of the *majority*; wherever custom endorses a good thing, then it becomes unfashionable as well as sinful to break through the rule—and there are thousands of people who would sooner be wicked than be unfashionable! But when a right thing is not commonly observed in society, men straightaway begin to think that it is not necessary, and so they leave it undone; as if a prisoner brought before the bench should say, "It is true I am a thief, but then all the people in the court where I live are thieves, too; therefore I ought not to be punished. It is true, sir, that I could not keep my hands from picking and stealing, but then none of my family ever could; they were brought up to it, and you would not have a man forsake the customs of his father and mother, would you? My father and mother were professional thieves, and therefore I cannot be blamed for following their example." But enlightened conscience warns us that custom is no excuse for sin. To your own Master each one of you will stand or fall! And, sirs, however graceless may be the parish in which you live, you have not to account for the parish, but for *yourselves*! And however covetous may be the times in which your lot is cast, you are not accountable for the times, but for *yourselves*! I charge you, in the name of God, let not custom ever be an excuse to your soul for sin, for custom will be no plea at the bar of God, nor will the multitude of those who are lost be any alleviation to your pain when you, too, are cast away with them into outer darkness!

Need I multiply reasons for the commonness of sins of omission? They grow on every plot of wasteland in our hearts, and their seeds are carried everywhere, as the down of the thistle, and as many as the seed of the poppy.

III. I come now, in the third place, to say a few words by way of setting forth THE SINFULNESS OF SINS OF OMISSION.

I wish I had the power to speak upon this subject as I would, for I long to see broken hearts among us convinced of their innumerable shortcomings. Broken hearts are God's sacrifices; there are some

among us who complain that they cannot believe in Jesus because they do not *feel* their need. I only wish they might be made to feel their need while, this morning, they are reminded of what they have left undone. Now I pray the Holy Spirit to make you feel the guilt of omissions as they are seen in the following light.

Consider for a moment what would be the consequences if God were to omit, for one minute, to supply you with breath; if the Lord should omit, for a *second*, to supply you with life! Suppose the infinite God should omit His long-suffering mercy for an hour! Suppose He should refuse for an hour to restrain the axe of judgment—where would you be then? Suppose that the great preserver of all should make but one day's intermission of goodness in His dealings with the universe? The sun would not shine; the air would fail to fill the lungs; and life would forget to be! The world would cease to exist, and the whole universe would subside into the nothingness from which it sprang! One moment's forgetfulness on God's part would be annihilation to all His creatures! Suppose that Jesus had left an omission in the plan of salvation? If only one part of our salvation had been left unfinished, then all must be forever accursed; then must you put your hands upon your loins, this morning, and go up and down through this hopeless world in desperate sorrow, saying one to the other, "There is no hope! Salvation is unfinished, and consequently unavailable! The Savior omitted one necessary item, and none of us can, therefore, be saved!" If you will digest these two thoughts, you may, perhaps, taste the blessedness which lies in neglect of necessary things.

Omissions cannot be trivial, if we only reflect what an influence they would have upon an ordinary commonwealth if they were perpetrated there as they are in God's commonwealth. Think a minute—if one person has a right to omit his duty, another has, and all have; then the watchman would omit to guard the house; the policeman would omit to arrest the thief; the judge would omit to sentence the offender; the sheriff would omit to punish the culprit; the government would omit to carry out its laws. Then every occupation would cease, and the world die of stagnation. The merchant would omit to attend to his calling; the farmer would omit to plow his land! Where would the commonwealth be? The kingdom would be out of joint. The machine would break down, for no cog of the wheels would act upon its fellow. How would societies of men exist at all? And surely, if this is not to be tolerated in a society of *men*, much less in that great commonwealth of which God is the King—in which angels and glorified spirits are the peers, and all creatures citizens! How can the Lord tolerate that here there should be an omission, and there an omission, in defiance of His authority? As the judge of all the earth, He must bring down His strong right hand upon these omissions, and crush out forever the spirit that would thus revolt against His will.

Think for a minute of how you would judge omissions towards yourselves; you have said to yourself, "As long as I do not drink or swear, or curse, or lie, or steal, it is a small matter that I neglect to be devout towards God." Now listen. There is your servant—he has never stolen your goods, he has never set your house on fire, he has never held a pistol to your ear, and yet you have discharged him. Why? "Why," you say, "because the fellow neglects everything about the house! I do not find that any command which I give him is carried out. *He* must be master, or *I* must—and if he will not do what I tell him, of what service is he? Let him go his way." That is how you judge your servant, is it? And is God to let *you* neglect His service, and yet to allow you to go unpunished? Take a soldier in the army. To commit an act of mutiny, it is not necessary for the soldier to fix his bayonet, and kill his colonel; when he is ordered out on guard, he can just stay at home, or when the battle rages, he may, if he chooses, just ground his arms, and say, "No, I am not going out to fight." Who could tolerate such mutiny—how could it be allowed? The omission is as vicious as the commission! Your child, the other day, smarted beneath the rod, and why? He had not lied or pilfered; there was no direct vicious act, but you had told him to go on an errand, and he had refused to go. And when you told him again and again, (and

remember, God has commanded you a great many more times than you ever told your child), there he stood in stolid obstinacy, and would not move; and then, very rightly he was made to feel that such things could not be permitted in your household. Now, if in our house we cannot tolerate this from a child, much more shall the Great Father not endure these obstinate omissions from us! “Ah, but,” you say, “I have not omitted towards God to go to church or to meeting regularly; I have not omitted the form of singing and prayer, and so on; all I have omitted is the *spiritual* matter, I have not loved Him.” And suppose, dear friends, suppose you have a wife, and the only thing that she has omitted is that she has omitted to love you—what would you think of that? Well, the house and domestic arrangements may show great cleanliness and order, but she is no wife to you if she has no love for you! The omission of love *you* feel to be a fatal one! And so that absence of love to *God* is such a dreadful absence, too! It is such a taking away of everything, that I only wish you could feel, you who have not loved Him, how guilty you are!

It may also help us, if we will consider for a moment what God thinks of omissions. Saul was ordered to kill the Amalekites, and not to let one escape, but he saved Agag and the best of the cattle, and for that, though he had positively done nothing but simply stayed his hand, and refused to do so, the Lord said, “I have put you away from being King over Israel.” Ahab was commanded to kill and slay Benhadad on account of innumerable cruelties; Benhadad was taken captive, but Ahab treated him with great leniency—and the result was, “Because you have let this man go, therefore your life shall be for his life.” Non-obedience ruined Ahab. Our Lord Jesus Christ was the gentlest of all men, and yet there was one miracle which He performed which had a degree of vengeance in it—and what was that? He stood by a fig tree, and saw leaves but no fruit, and He said, “Henceforth there shall be no fruit on you forever,” as if to show that fruitless things provoked His anger—not so much brambles which bear their thorns, but *fig trees* which ought to bear figs, and do not. Remember, too, the parable which we read this morning in your hearing. The man with the one talent was condemned, if you remember, and his condemnation was for this—not that he had squandered his lord’s money, but that he had not *increased* it; so that, in God’s opinion, the *not doing* of good is sufficient to condemn men even if they have not committed positive evil. When the Holy Spirit convicts men of sin, what is the special sin which He reveals? The sin of adultery? The sin of robbery? No, of an omission. “Of sin, because they believe not on Me.” Omitting to believe in Jesus is the master sin of which the Holy Spirit convicts the world! Remember that solemn question of Paul when he asks, “How shall we escape if we—what? If we *swear*? If we frequent the tavern? No—“if we neglect so great a salvation?” The life-long neglect of God’s salvation involves us in danger from which there is no escape!

IV. Much more might be said, but time fails me, and therefore let me remind you very solemnly of what will be THE RESULT AND PUNISHMENT OF SINS OF OMISSION.

Sins of omission will *condemn* us! Take the parable with which we closed our reading this morning—the king said to those on His left hand, “I was hungry, and you gave Me no meat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me no drink.” He did not say to them, “You were frequenters of evil houses; you were common drunkards; you were dishonest; you were fraudulent bankrupts; you were neglectors of the Sabbath, you were common profane swearers.” No, but He said, “I was hungry, and you gave Me no meat.” It was the *absence of virtue*, rather than the presence of vice, which condemned them! “Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord.” “But, Lord, the man has no vice about him; he has not plunged himself into the kennel of open iniquity.” “Ah, but that suffices not! If there are not the positive *fruits* of the Spirit producing in him holiness of life, he shall not see the Lord.” O sirs, let none of us deceive ourselves! God will not accept our profession of religion because it simply keeps us chaste and polite, and makes us civil to our neighbors; we must have worked in us, by the Holy Spirit, a righteousness *better* than that of the Scribes and Pharisees, or we shall by no means enter into the kingdom of heaven!

There must be worked in us as a work of divine grace—a deep abhorrence of sin, an earnest clinging to purity, a resolute pursuit of everything that is peaceful, and lovely, and of good repute, or else let us prate as we may, we shall have no inheritance in the kingdom of God! I preach not salvation by works in any sense or degree, or shape, or form, but salvation by grace alone! Yet still I hear in my ears the echo of the Baptist's words, "Now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which brings not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." Not only the tree that brings forth *bad fruit* is burned, but the tree which is *barren* and unprofitable is hewn down, and cast into the fire! If we bring not forth the fruits of true saving faith, we may be sure that such faith is not in our possession!

Sins of omission not only bring condemnation, but if persevered in, they effectually shut against us the possibilities of *pardon*. I mean that sins of omission against the gospel deprive us of gospel privileges. "He who believes not"—is there pardon for him? "He who believes not"—is there rescue for him? No! He "is condemned already, because he has not believed on the Son of God." He that repents not—will divine grace reach him? Will the mercy of God blot out sins that are unrepented of? No, not so! As long as we cling to sin, sin will cling to us as the leprosy did to the house of Gehazi. God forgives all sins through Jesus Christ, and He is willing to forgive the vilest of us if we come to Him trusting alone in Jesus; but if we have not faith in Jesus Christ, it is not possible for us to receive from the Lord the forgiveness of sins which He promises only to those who believe in Jesus! In the marriage feast of which we read in the gospels, there were many who would not come, and they perished because they would not come; they are not charged with having actually committed anything wrong, but they perished for *not coming*. There was one who came to the feast, but he had not on a wedding garment; I do not read that he had put on rags, or had decorated himself with anything offensive to the master of the house—but he had failed to put on the wedding garment, and that was the deadly sin. And what was the sentence? "Bind him hand and foot, and deliver him to the tormentors." So I could not charge some of you, today, with anything outwardly contrary to morality, but, O sirs, if you have not—mark this, if you have *not put on the righteousness of Jesus Christ* by a living faith in Him, the tormentors must have you at the last! O that this truth of God might sink into your ears, and into your hearts! There is pardon for all omission to be found in the flowing wounds of Jesus! There is life in a LOOK at Him! Over the heads of these multiplied shortcomings, God's mercy will come to all believers. So, remain not in your unbelief! May the Holy Spirit, by His own mighty power give you grace now to repent, and to believe—and *yours* shall be the salvation, and *God's* the glory, world without end! Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON— Matthew 25.

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